

# SIERCKS MAY VIEW SCENE OF CRIME AND CORROBORATE STORY

Would Have Him Dig Up Revolver He Claims Was Buried in Yard

## FATHER OF INSANE MAN SAYS HE IS INNOCENT

Talks to Governor Over Long Distance Telephone This Morning

Whether or not John G. H. Siercks, the imbecile, will be sent down to Columbia county in the custody of Warden Lawson of the penitentiary, to go over the ground and unearth the revolver which he claims he buried some place in the yard after the shooting of Mrs. Wehrman and child, in order to establish the authenticity of his confession as to the commission of the crime, will be determined at a meeting of the board of control.

Governor West is inclined to the belief that the board would be acting within its jurisdiction in sending a patient of the asylum, or any other ward of the state out upon a mission of this character when a man's liberty is at stake, in the custody of an officer but Secretary of State Olcott believes that matters of this kind rest solely within the powers of the courts and that the board has no authority to release the patient from the asylum unless turned over to a duly authorized officer of the courts of the county from which the patient was committed.

The whole question of whether or not Siercks is telling the truth or is merely laboring under the delusion that he has committed the crime from reading the papers or has been coached rests upon his ability to go over the grounds at the scene of the crime and establish his guilt by pointing out the details surrounding the facts of the case and to dig up the gun which he claims to have buried in the yard. Superintendent Steiner will present his views at the meeting of the board which are to the effect that the functions of the asylum authorities are purely custodial; that they have no right to grant a parole to any patient for any purpose and that the civil authorities of the county from which the patient was committed should order the temporary release and appoint an agent to take charge of the patient.

### Father Calls Up Governor.

Gustav H. Siercks, the father of the insane boy called up Governor West this morning by long distance telephone and informed him that he did not believe a word of the boy's story but did not have money enough to pay his expenses of coming to Salem to state the case and Governor West informed him that he would send Warden Lawson of the penitentiary down to go over the ground and secure such facts as were obtainable concerning the case.

Frank Wehrman, husband of the murdered woman, of Portland, called Superintendent Steiner up by long distance this morning and inquired why he was not informed of the proceedings leading up to the obtaining of the confession and why he was not notified in order that he might be present when the confession was made and Dr. Steiner told him that it came so quickly and happened so suddenly that no chance was given to notify anybody. Wehrman said that it was strange that the boy should tell such a straight story but that he did not believe it or would not until the boy made good by digging up the gun he claims to have buried.

Those who are conversant with the law are of the opinion however, that the whole thing is a farce from start to finish and that if a writ of habeas corpus were served upon the penitentiary officials to obtain the release of Pender, on the ground that the adoption of the constitutional amendment abolishing capital punishment automatically operates to liberate both Pender and Wilkins, convicted of the murder of Lou Winter, whose death penalty was commuted to life imprisonment, that there would be no question but that the supreme court would order their release and a pardon or any other action on the part of the governor is absolutely unnecessary. Pender positively refuses to be interviewed upon the subject and declines to make any kind of a statement in connection with his case.

### GRIFFITH CASE REVERSED— WIDOWS DOWER RIGHT UPHOLD

"A wife upon marriage acquires by virtue thereof no interest in the personal property of her husband, and he has a right to dispose of it as he pleases without her consent; but by a transfer of his real estate he cannot defeat her dower therein. She has an inchoate dower only in lands to which he has the title. There is no dower in an equity, but the rule in Oregon is that where the wife occupies the position of a quasi creditor as where she is suing

# "ON TO THE RHINE" IS CRY OF PARIS TODAY

French Wax Enthusiastic when Reports of Victory Reach Capital

Paris, Jan. 5.—"On to the Rhine!" arose the cry in Paris today with the issuance of a war office statement telling of French victories both in the extreme north and to the southwest, on the Kaiser's own soil in Alsace.

The report described a surprise attack on the Germans on the sand dunes in the Nieuport and St. Georges district, resulting in the silencing of their batteries and gains by the allies of from 300 to 500 yards. In this region the re-organized Belgian artillery was said to be acting effectively.

West of Lens it was stated a stop had been put to German mining operations, the burrows on which the invaders were at work having been played up by a terrific fire from the allies' mortars.

Near Lille, the Germans were reported to have destroyed a line of trenches with their artillery but it was announced that the French subsequently retook the positions at the point of the bayonet.

A fierce artillery duel was said to be raging in the Rheims-Craonne district, without material changes in the situation.

In Alsace said the statement, the French had entered Creux d'Argonne and the fight which grew constantly fiercer, was declared to be going in their favor.

A foolish woman grows old about as gracefully as she climbs a fence.

## SIERCKS' STORY IS IMPOSSIBLE ONE

Portland, Ore., Jan. 5.—That it would have been physically impossible for John G. Siercks, the inmate at the state insane asylum, confessor to the murder of Mrs. Daisy Wehrman and little son on the night of September, 1911, to have traversed the distance from the Schmidt farm near Hillsboro to the Wehrman cabin, far up the mountain beyond Seapoope, is shown primarily in the fact that no train service whatever was operating on the United Railroads at that time.

Without trains it would have been impossible to have made it in the time specified, that is, between 7:30 p. m. and 10 p. m., railroad men assert. Over the rough country between Villa Vista and Burlington, thence to Seapoope and up the steep logging road to Parsons and the settlement is at least 20 miles.

Freight service on the United Railroads could not have been resorted to by Siercks for the reason the trains were operated exclusively by daylight.

Records of the North Bank road show that no speeder was stolen from the company's shed at Burlington the night of the murder.

George A. Thatcher, psychologist and investigator who secured the confession of Siercks, declares the way the man reached the Wehrman cabin is not essential.

### Coroner's Jury Says Grasser Was Murderer

The coroner's jury which was empaneled at Lehman & Clough's undertaking parlors at 1:30 this afternoon found that Harry Elmer Bacon came to his death by gunshot wounds at the hands of Brassius Grasser, Sheriff Esch and District Attorney Ringo, to whom Grasser confessed to the crime, testified before the coroner's jury and some of the neighbors of the Bacon family also testified.

The Bacon family moved to this state from Edgewood, Iowa, about 14 years ago, where the boy was born. The deceased was 10 years, 10 months and 10 days of age. The family moved to their 10-acre tract near Liberty last fall from Mapleton, in Lane county. They lived on the lower Siuslaw river in Lane county and Florence for a number of years. Their 13-year-old daughter was burned to death at Deadwood, a small town in western Lane county, on June 30, 1912, and the boy and his one remaining child, Mr. and Mrs. Bacon were well known in the community for their short residence here and are respected by all their neighbors, who offer their sympathy.

The coroner's jury consisted of L. J. Lehman, foreman; M. L. Bryant, W. S. Lowe, F. A. Welch, W. L. Prunk and W. B. Gilson.

# SCHOOL BOARD MAY ADOPT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PLAN HERE

Present Building So Crowded That February Classes Cannot Enter

## SUPERINTENDENT ELLIOTT FAVORS MAKING CHANGE

Over Hundred Will Be Added to Present Enrollment in February

That Salem is in imperative need of some immediate and effective solution of the problem of congestion in the High school and that the adoption of the junior high school system offers the best and quickest way out of the difficulty which the district finds itself in was the consensus of opinion of the school board at the regular meeting last night. As a result of the discussion of the crowded conditions of the high school and the urgency advanced by City Superintendent Elliott for the early consideration of the junior high system the board will hold a special meeting on next Friday evening when Superintendent Elliott will submit the outline of a plan for its inauguration upon a small scale as an entering wedge to its final adoption in all of the schools of the city.

The question came up directly when Superintendent Elliott called attention to the fact that at the beginning of the second semester, February 8, 110 pupils who graduate from the eighth grade in the grade schools will enter the High school and there is no way of making room for them in the high school without using all of the available space in the building and crowding the domestic science department out of its present quarters into more cramped and inadequate space. Superintendent Elliott confessed that he was worried over what to do with the new pupils and arrangements will have to be made for the employment of at least three more teachers to handle the new classes.

He pointed out that there are four vacant rooms already available in the East school, and two more would be available if the junior high system were adopted, which contemplates the training of the 7th, 8th and 9th grades in the grade school buildings, preparatory to entrance into the advanced high school grades. Room would also be available in the Grant, Lincoln, Park and Englewood schools, if the junior high system were to be put into effect and in this manner plenty of room would be provided in the high school for the three higher grades for several years to come. When Superintendent Elliott submits his plan for the adoption of the junior high system it will probably be upon a small scale which will permit of the working late into a general system gradually and will take about two years to work up to the complete junior high system in all of the schools.

Mr. Elliott reported at last night's meeting that there are 694 pupils in the high school at present which with the 110 new pupils who will enter at the opening of the second semester, will bring the total up to an even 800 which is too many pupils for the present accommodations in the high school buildings. By using three of the vacant rooms in the East school for handling the new entrants into the high school course temporarily, until better arrangements can be made for their instruction, Superintendent Elliott thinks he can carry along with the balance of the school year, and with the completion of the proposed new eight-room school building for South Salem next fall he says he will be ready to inaugurate the junior high system in all of the schools.

## DECISION IN M'KINNEY CASE IS SUSTAINED

On the ground that the plaintiff, while a taxpayer and otherwise qualified to bring suit to establish the constitutionality of any act of the legislature which has a tendency to unjustly increase his burden of taxation, he failed to show wherein the operation of the act creating the corporation department, commonly called the "blue sky law," will cause him to suffer a greater burden of taxation than before it went into effect, the supreme court affirmed the decree of Judge Galloway, of the circuit court for Marion county, and dismissed the action of W. B. McKinney, plaintiff, vs. R. A. Watson, corporation commissioner, and the state board. The opinion was written by Justice Burnett.

This act was brought for the purpose of testing the constitutionality of the "blue sky law," but, inasmuch as the supreme court holds that plaintiff,

# GERMAN AVIATORS DAMAGE BRITISH AMMUNITION STATION

Berlin, by wireless to London, Jan. 5.—German aviators have bombed the British ammunition bases at Coudekerque and Rosentiel, suburbs of the French port of Dunkirk, the war office announced today. It was asserted that quantities of ammunition were destroyed at both places and that Coudekerque was set on fire and partly burned, besides which about 100 persons were wounded.

## CHERRIANS ANNUAL BANQUET TONIGHT

Subjects of King Bing Will Feast, Elect Officers and Initiate

The Salem Cherrians meet tonight at the Hotel Marion to hold their annual meeting, at which the new officers of the organization will be chosen and eight new Cherrians will be initiated. Henry W. Meyers, C. S. Hamilton, R. F. Peters, P. E. Graber, George H. Riches, P. E. Fullerton, Charles H. Fisher and Watt Shipp will be the new ones who will assume the obligation of the Cherrians, and promise to love, honor and obey the mandates of King Bing in the best interests of Salem. A feast of no small proportions has been arranged for by John Turner, head of the banquet committee, and by his assistants, Theo. Roth and W. M. Hamilton. They promise something unique in the way of a political menu which will be served to the members.

King Bing, Milton L. Meyers, will preside as toastmaster, and the following toasts will be responded to: "Anecdotes of the Campaign, of the Allies Strategists," Harry O. White, "Hot Air Brakes, or Who Made the Flat Wheel," T. L. Billingsley.

The Salesmen's Delight, or Why Boys Leave Home," Theo. R. Towns.

"The Robbitt Flinch, or the Business Man's Advertising," Wm. McGilchrist, Jr.

"Conservation, or Why Cherrians Go Broke," Carle Ahlman.

"Two to One on the White, or the Final Plunge," Chas. H. Fisher.

"Formaldehyde, or the Preservation of the Cherrians," C. B. Webb.

The initiation work has been in charge of Ralph D. Moores, but Mr. Moores was called to Portland today, and Fred S. Bynon and William L. Garsden took up the work and will handle the ceremonies tonight. The Cherrians are called upon to assemble at 7 o'clock and the events will be run off in rapid order. The committee promises that every possible dull moment has been eliminated from the program and the stunts and principal events will be rushed through. The nominating committee has prepared a list of candidates to be voted upon, but any other candidates may be nominated from the floor. The prepared list will not be given out until tonight at the banquet. The retiring officers are as follows:

M. L. Meyers, King Bing; W. L. Spaulding, Lord Governor Wood; Carl D. Gabrielson, chancellor of the rolls; Wm. S. Watson, keeper of the orchard; Geo. H. Graves, king's jester. Council of the nobles: Wm. McGilchrist, Jr., duke of Lambert; J. R. Young, Queen Anna's consort; H. C. Bishop, bishop of Hikeal; Theo. R. Kay, marquis of Maraschino; Rev. H. E. Marshall, Earl of Waldo.

In failing to show personal injury as a result of the operation of the law, was not the proper person to bring suit for the annulment of the act and this question was not decided by the court. "In the absence of any showing of facts from which the court can deduce the legal conclusion that he is about to suffer a greater burden of taxation than before, his contention appears to be a mere academic proposition.

### Petitions for rehearing were denied in the following:

Mormon vs. Ellis, Pelton vs. Sheridan, Martin vs. Thomas.

Rehearing was granted in North Powder Milling company vs. Dalton Smith, et al.

The average man isn't half as square with other men as he expects other men to be with him.

If there is anything more miserable than a city pigeon in a rainstorm something should be done about it.

### The Weather

Tonight and Wednesday—rain west portion; southeasterly winds.

### Allies' Claims Denied.

Berlin, by wireless to London, Jan. 5.—A denial of the allies' claims of successes in the western war zone was received here from the front today.

On the contrary, it was asserted that the Germans had captured a 200-meter trench north of Arras, taking many prisoners, repulsed French attacks in the Argonne and defeated, in a series of desperate bayonet fights, all French assaults on them in Alsace, between Steinbach and Aulhail.

From Poland came news of German attacks on the Russians east of the Bzura river and northeast of Bolimow, and of gains east of the Bzura river. It was admitted that Teutonic progress in the eastern war theatre was slow.

### Austrians Defeat Slavs.

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# ENGLAND AFTER BIG TERRITORIAL PRIZE IS LATEST REPORT

German East Africa About to Fall Into Hands of the English

## CAMPAIGN ON INDIAN OCEAN BRITISH VICTORY

Dar-es-Salaam Center of the Fierce Naval Attack—Fall Expected Soon

By J. W. T. Mason  
(Former London correspondent for the United Press.)

New York, Jan. 5.—Great Britain has begun operations to secure its third and last territorial prize of the war.

A small body of Indian troops, offered by Englishmen, recently seized the southern part of Nebuchadnezzar's ancient Babylonian empire, adding to Britain's possessions the valuable Turkish "Hinterland" of the Persian Gulf.

Soon afterward Turkish suzerainty of Egypt was dissolved and Cleopatra's kingdom was formally annexed by the British.

Monday an English squadron bombarded Dar-es-Salaam, the port of German East Africa, and secured a foothold for the acquisition of the most valuable of the Kaiser's distant colonies.

Whatever else the war may give to Great Britain in the way of new colonial possessions will be subordinate in value to these three conquests.

There is scarcely any other land on the globe which the British covet. Babylonia, Egypt and German East Africa round off the empire.

The report of the bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam does not state whether or not this commercial and political capital, created by German ambitions, has fallen. Probably it is still holding out; otherwise the British announcement would have been more explicit.

Presumably the city refused to surrender, whereupon King George's warships began shelling it.

Naval operations may be progressing in conjunction with a military expedition against the port from the land side. Two months ago a British force allowed itself to be surprised in German East Africa. Sufficient time has now elapsed for its reorganization and it is possible that a new campaign is in progress.

Great Britain has long desired German East Africa because, under the Kaiser's rule, it destroyed the unity of the British African possessions. British colonies would have been continuous along the East African coast, from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope had it not been for this German area.

The late Cecil Rhodes started the cry for the seizure of German East Africa by initiating the project for a British railroad connecting Cairo with Cape Town.

"The 'Cape to Cairo' all-rod route" became a permanent British ambition. It will grow into an actuality after the present war if the naval attack on Dar-es-Salaam is followed by successful land operations.

### Russians Rout Turks.

Petrograd, Jan. 5.—A tremendous rout by the Russians of the Turks in Transcaucasia was announced today by the war office here.

The Ninth Ottoman corps, surrounded, had surrendered, it was said. The victory was attributed to the arrival in Transcaucasia of Slav reinforcements, who, striking the Turks on the flank, cut their force in two, taking all their positions, with enormous quantities of munitions and great numbers of prisoners.

Cossacks were said to be pursuing the fleeing Mohammedans.

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# JESS WILLIAMS IS PLACED IN CUSTODY

Is Second of Gang to Be Arrested in Connection with Fowler Murder

San Francisco, Jan. 5.—Jess Williams, who has been the object of police search for two weeks in connection with the murder of William Fowler, was arrested today. Williams was found by Detectives Bunker and Sullivan, who have been working on clues furnished by a forsaken consort of "Nig" Graham, another suspect. Williams is the drug peddler from whom Vernon W. Fowler, indicted by a grand jury, in connection with the Fowler crime, is alleged to have purchased drugs. Williams was seen in the company of Fowler and Graham on the night of the murder.

Mrs. Louise Wolfe, proprietor of a local hotel, will be brought to headquarters this afternoon to identify Williams as the man she saw in a conference with Fowler on the day of the murder.

Although "Nig" Graham, who was arrested yesterday as a suspect talked freely with detectives and professed a willingness to go before the grand jury with information concerning two other suspects, Charles Leroy and "Tone," Captain of Detectives Shea said today that he did not think Graham could shed any further light on the mystery. Graham admits that he knows "Tone" and Leroy but declares he knows nothing about the robbery and murder plot. Captain Shea believes Graham's statements are true. For this reason Graham will not go before the grand jury.

"Graham's statements," said Captain Shea, "have led us nowhere."

## AMERICA MAY SEND PROTEST TO GERMANY

Developments Show that American Coal and Supplies Have Fallen to Germans

Washington, Jan. 5.—The possibility of a shipping protest to Germany as a result of American complaints to England loomed up here today.

It was learned from an authoritative source that the question of Germany securing coal, oil and other contraband from America was involved in the present discussion with England. England has complained that American coal has fallen into German hands as a result of misleading clearance papers and such incidents. It was said, had caused a tightening of the British patrol.

Cargoes of coal, seized by German vessels in the Pacific probably will be the subject of representations to be made to the German foreign office in Berlin.

With straphangers it appears to be immaterial whether they hang together or hang separately.

Many a great man is never heard of 20 miles from home.

Sight.

A strong Slav force was repulsed, it was stated, an officer of high rank and three others of lesser position, besides a large number of men and two rapid fire guns fell into the Austrian hands.

A Russian aeroplane was also shot down in the course of the fight.

## "WORLD AT WAR" ATLAS

The Capital Journal has just received a new shipment of the "World at War" atlases. They are of a later and revised edition, compared with those we have been giving away to our subscribers. Instead of 16 pages, they consist of 24 large, highly-illustrated pages, printed on heavy enameled book.

The atlas contains splendid colored maps of all the warring countries, with routes of travel and railroad lines; many tables of army and navy and general statistics—in fact, the work is a complete ready-reference library for students of the great war. It is a book which would ordinarily sell for \$1.00 or \$1.50, but we are having them made up in large lots and buy them at a price which allows us to give them away to subscribers on very easy conditions.

All who pay three months subscription, old or new, back subscription or in advance, in case their paper is delivered by carrier, will receive one of these atlases free. All mail subscribers, old or new, who pay a year's subscription (\$3.00), either back subscription or in advance, will also be entitled to receive an atlas without extra charge.

This is the most liberal offer the Capital Journal has ever made.

# MAYOR IN FAVOR OF MUNICIPAL LIGHT AND WATER PLANT

Opening Address To City Council Contains Important Recommendations

## URGES ADOPTION OF THE DAY LABOR PLAN

Will Insist On More System in Purchasing City Supplies in General

### NEW CITY OFFICERS ELECTED LAST NIGHT

William H. Trindall, city attorney.  
Dr. C. E. Cahatt, city physician.  
Walter Shelton, city engineer.  
E. S. Budlong, street commissioner.  
George Brown, member of park board.  
Police Department.  
J. A. Poland, W. J. White, A. E. Faustman, O. F. Victor, E. W. Stubbs, Police matron, Mrs. J. B. Shenka.  
Fire Department.  
Harry Hutton, chief firemen: W. H. Phillips, Ray Cooper, Robert Muths, L. R. Murphy, Fred C. Cuthbert, Earl Beck, Ed E. Anderson, Roy Hickson, D. P. Johnson, and William Iwan. Call men chosen for the fire department were: Claude Jorgensen, Fred Bernhardt, Frank Friest, C. C. Chaudhry, Emmett Johnson, John Gary and R. E. Ploff.

The election of officers was the principal interest last night at the first meeting of the new council and the last meeting of the old council. Mayor Steeves retired with a few appropriate remarks and handed the gavel to Mayor-elect Harley O. White. Mr. White then outlined his policies for the coming year and told of a few things he hoped to accomplish during his administration with the support of the council and the people of the city.

Mayor White stated that the primary effort of the new administration would be to conduct the city's business on a sound business basis and that they should endeavor to get their money's worth for all sums expended. He advocated the city's ownership of the water and light plants. He said that many valuable waterpower sites available to the city of Salem could be secured cheaply at present but that in a short time would be in the hands of corporations and the price would go up. He said that competent engineers had told him that an electric plant large enough for this city could be installed at a cost of between \$200,000 and \$250,000 and that the \$16,500 that was being paid annually by the city for its street lights was the interest on \$330,000. He asked that a committee of council and citizens be appointed to investigate the matter.

Mayor White advocated the day labor plan in city construction work in order to provide work for Salem laborers and do away with the importation of foreign laborers. He advocated permanent

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